

## **Addressing Asthma in New Jersey Factsheet**

### **Burden of Asthma**

There are significant disparities in the burden of asthma among specific populations in New Jersey.

- Approximately 9.1% of New Jersey children (188,000) currently have asthma.
- Approximately 7.7% of New Jersey adults (511,000) currently have asthma.
- The number of women with asthma is nearly double the number of men with asthma.
- In 2009, there were 16,608 asthma hospitalizations among New Jersey residents. During the same year, there were also 52,753 emergency department visits for asthma.
- New Jersey children under five years of age experience the highest emergency department and hospitalization rates for asthma when compared to all other age groups.
- Hospitalization rates for black and Hispanic residents are higher than white residents.
- Emergency department visit rate for blacks was 4.7 times that of whites, and for Hispanics was 1.5 times that of non-Hispanics.
- In 2006, asthma was reported as the underlying cause of death for 108 residents and asthma was listed as a contributing cause of death for another 148 residents.

### **Partnerships**

Asthma is a complex disease which requires a comprehensive and coordinated response including efforts directed at health care delivery systems, environmental assessment and intervention, education and health policy review. The *NJ Asthma Strategic Plan 2008-2013: Addressing Asthma through the Lifespan*. The Plan serves as a guidance document for the state government, healthcare providers, community organizations, public health advocates and others in the awareness, management and treatment of asthma in New Jersey. The State Asthma Committee and Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey (PACNJ) Coalition have over 100 members representing 70 organizations and agencies statewide.

### **Asthma in the School**

The PACNJ has developed online trainings for the school nurse and faculty on asthma management, identification of triggers, the asthma treatment plan and self-management. These trainings (*Asthma Management in the Classroom: What Teachers Need to Know*, *Asthma Basics for School Nurses*, and *Gadgets and Gizmos for Asthma Control*) are available at [www.pacnj.org](http://www.pacnj.org). The Asthma Friendly School Award was established to raise awareness across the state and to recognize those who completed all six education programs and complied with the requirements to create an asthma friendly environment. Over 500 schools have received the award.

### **Asthma for Childcare Providers**

New Jersey statistics demonstrate that the children under 5 years of age have the highest hospitalizations and emergency room visit rates due to asthma. Our Coalition has developed the *Policies and Practices for Asthma Friendly Childcare* training. The

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training focuses on common asthma triggers and actions to take for triggers, the asthma treatment plan and steps to follow during an asthma episode.

### **Asthma Disparities**

The Asthma Awareness Education Program (AAEP) developed the Community Model for Asthma and partnered with the Office Minority and Multicultural Health (OMMH) to issue the “Community Health Mobilization Grants: Reducing Pediatric Asthma Disparities” grant to community-based organizations in areas with high asthma hospitalization and ED visit rates. The project outcomes are to reduce asthma related visits to the emergency department and to reduce asthma related school/childcare absences in children through local/state collaboration, outreach, identification of high risk children, and provision of case management/education services.

The “Culturally and Linguistically Competent Health Education Materials: A Guide for New Jersey” was developed as a result of participation in the Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research-Learning Partnership to Decrease Disparities in Pediatric Asthma. This document provides a comprehensive checklist to employ when creating culturally competent health materials and has had over 1,600 downloads.